Amendments of the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims

1-84.   (Cancelled)

85.   (Currently Amended) A method for presenting a user with a graphic advertisement in an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, wherein television commercials and other television programming are transmitted to the user television equipment over a communications path from a distribution facility and are displayed for the user on the user television equipment, comprising:

displaying, without entering the interactive television program guide, a full-screen television commercial associated with a given advertiser;

providing the user with an opportunity to access interactive television program guide information ~~from~~ provided by the interactive television program guide by ~~displaying~~ overlaying an icon on the full-screen television commercial, wherein the icon ~~that~~ indicates the availability of the interactive television program guide information ~~during the display of a television commercial associated with a given advertiser~~; and

displaying the interactive television program guide including the interactive television program guide

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information and a graphic advertisement associated with the given advertiser ~~in the interactive television program guide for the user~~ when the user accesses the interactive television program guide information in response to the icon.

86.   (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 wherein the television commercial and the graphic advertisement are both branded with the same brand, the method further comprising displaying the graphic advertisement branded with that brand on the user television equipment.

87.   (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory.

88.   (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server.

89.   (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory according to a schedule.

90.   (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server according to a schedule.

91.   (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic

advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

92. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

93. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

94. (Previously Presented) The method defined in claim 85 further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

95. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85 further comprising enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide.

96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85 further comprising enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide by displaying a point-of-sale window having information on the product or service in response to a user input when the icon is displayed.

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97.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85
further comprising enabling the user to purchase a product or
service using the interactive television program guide by
displaying a point-of-sale window having information on the
product or service in response to a user input when the icon is
displayed, wherein the point-of-sale window also provides
access to other products or services.

98.   (Currently Amended) A system for presenting a
user with a graphic advertisement in an interactive television
program guide implemented on user television equipment, wherein
television commercials and other television programming are
transmitted to the user television equipment over a
communications path from a distribution facility and are
displayed for the user on the user television equipment,
comprising:

means for displaying, without entering the
interactive television program guide, a full-screen television
commercial associated with a given advertiser;

means for providing the user with an opportunity
to access interactive television program guide information ~~from~~
provided by the interactive television program guide by
~~displaying~~ overlaying an icon on the full-screen television
commercial, wherein the icon ~~that~~ indicates the availability of
the interactive television program guide information ~~during the
display of a television commercial associated with a given
advertiser~~; and

means for displaying the interactive television
program guide including the interactive television program

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guide information and a graphic advertisement associated with the given advertiser ~~in the interactive television program guide for the user~~ when the user accesses the interactive television program guide information in response to the icon.

99. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 wherein the television commercial and the graphic advertisement are both branded with the same brand, the system further comprising means for displaying the graphic advertisement branded with that brand on the user television equipment.

100. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory.

101. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server.

102. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory according to a schedule.

103. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server according to a schedule.

104. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

105. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

106. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

107. (Previously Presented) The system defined in claim 98 further comprising means for retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

108. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98 further comprising means for enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide.

109. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98 further comprising means for enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide by displaying a point-of-sale window having information

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on the product or service in response to a user input when the icon is displayed.

110. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 98 further comprising means for enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide by displaying a point-of-sale window having information on the product or service in response to a user input when the icon is displayed, wherein the point-of-sale window also provides access to other products or services.

111. (Currently Amended) A system for presenting a user with a graphic advertisement in an interactive television program guide comprising:

a display device;

an input device; and

control circuitry configured to:

receive television commercials and other television programming from a distribution facility;

direct the display device to display, without entering the interactive television program guide, a full-screen television commercial associated with a given advertiser;

direct the display device to ~~display~~ overlay an icon that indicates the availability of interactive television program guide information ~~during the display of a~~ on the full-screen television commercial ~~associated with a given advertiser~~;

receive a command from the input device

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that indicates that the user has accessed the interactive television program guide information in response to the icon; and

direct the display device to display the interactive television program guide information and a [[a]] graphic advertisement associated with the given advertiser in response to the command being received.

112. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 111 wherein:

the television commercial and the graphic advertisement are both branded with the same brand; and

the control circuitry is further configured to direct the display device to display the graphic advertisement branded with that brand.

113. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 111 wherein:

the system further comprises local memory; and

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from the local memory.

114. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 113 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from the local memory according to a schedule.

115. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 113 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from the local memory in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

116. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 113 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

117. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 111 wherein:

the system further comprises a remote server; and

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from the remote server.

118. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 116 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from the remote server according to a schedule.

119. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 116 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to

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retrieve the graphic advertisement from the remote server in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

120. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 116 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to retrieve the graphic advertisement from the remote server in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

121. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 111 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to enable the user to purchase a product or service.

122. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 111 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to enable the user to purchase a product or service by directing the display device to display a point-of-sale window having information on the product or service in response to the command being received.

123. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 111 wherein:

the control circuitry is further configured to enable the user to purchase a product or service by directing the display device to display a point-of-sale window having information on the product or service in response to the

command being received, wherein the point-of-sale window also provides access to other products or services.

124. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium encoded with machine-readable instructions for use in presenting a user with a graphic advertisement in an interactive television program guide implemented on user television equipment, wherein television commercials and other television programming are transmitted to the user television equipment over a communications path from a distribution facility and are displayed for the user on the user television equipment, the machine-readable instructions comprising:

displaying, without entering the interactive television program guide, a full-screen television commercial associated with a given advertiser;

providing the user with an opportunity to access interactive television program guide information ~~from~~ provided by the interactive television program guide by ~~displaying~~ overlaying an icon on the full-screen television commercial, wherein the icon ~~that~~ indicates the availability of the interactive television program guide information ~~during the display of a television commercial associated with a given advertiser~~; and

displaying the interactive television program guide including the interactive television program guide information and a graphic advertisement associated with the given advertiser ~~in the interactive television program guide for the user~~ when the user accesses the interactive television program guide information in response to the icon.

125. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124 wherein the television commercial and the graphic advertisement are both branded with the same brand, the machine-readable instructions further comprising displaying the graphic advertisement branded with that brand on the user television equipment.

126. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory.

127. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server.

128. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory according to a schedule.

129. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server according to a schedule.

130. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

131. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server in response to a real-time flag in the commercial.

132. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from local memory in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

133. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising retrieving the graphic advertisement from a remote server in response to a real-time vertical-blanking-interval flag in the commercial.

134. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide.

135. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide by displaying a point-of-sale window having information on the product or service in response to a user input when the icon is displayed.

136. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium defined in claim 124, the machine-readable instructions further comprising enabling the user to purchase a product or service using the interactive television program guide by displaying a point-of-sale window having information on the product or service in response to a user input when the icon is displayed, wherein the point-of-sale window also provides access to other products or services.